

ALABAMA

**2002
Annual Report**

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL



“A Partnership for Positive Change”

State Rehabilitation Council
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

In Remembrance



Luddie Wade
Consumer Advocate
Alabama Department of Mental
Health/Mental Retardation
Tuscaloosa

1996 - 2002
Member
State Rehabilitation Council

1994 - 1995
Charter Member
Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services

Prepared by: Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services
2129 East South Boulevard • Montgomery, AL 36116-2455
(334) 281-8780 • 1-800-441-7607 • TTY: 1-800-499-1816
Fax: (334) 281-1973 • ADA Hotline 1-800-205-9986
www.rehab.state.al.us

Steve Shivers
Commissioner

*SRC & VRS:
A Partnership for Positive Change*

Chairperson's Message	2
Commissioner's Message	2
Purpose & History	3
Council Functions.....	4
SRC Performance	5-6
FY 2002 Highlights: Vocational Rehabilitation Service Impacts Consumers	7
Networking With Community-Based VRS Consumer Advisory Councils	8
Subcommittee Activities	9-11
Employer Survey Questions.....	12
Statewide Needs Assessment	13-14
Results - Statewide Needs Assessment	15
Membership: Composition and Demographics	16-18
Appendices Bylaws.....	19-24
Conflict of Interest Policy	24

SRC & VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change



As chairman of the State Rehabilitation Council, I am pleased with the efforts made during FY 2002 to improve the lives of Alabamians with disabilities. The council has continued to partner with the Vocational Rehabilitation Service in an effort to enhance and implement existing policies and goals to bring about positive changes in services which will make a difference in the lives of the people we serve.

I am particularly proud of the accomplishments of this past year — especially with the implementation of the Statewide Needs Assessment. The results of this assessment will serve to further aid the council and VRS in providing people with disabilities the highest quality services.

I feel assured that in FY 2003, the State Rehabilitation Council will continue to support VRS with vital input and that as a team they will strive to make an even greater impact on the lives of Alabamians with disabilities.

E. Chandler Bramlett
Chairperson
State Rehabilitation Council

Over the past year, the Vocational Rehabilitation Service division of ADRS partnered with the State Rehabilitation Council to assist more than 42,000 Alabamians with disabilities. Together, we accomplished much to improve the lives of the people we serve.



Information compiled from the Statewide Needs Assessment allowed us to identify specific needs of our citizens with disabilities and to work towards providing solutions to these needs. It allowed us to improve services and to advocate more appropriately for the development of programs to meet identified unmet needs. Also, revisions made this past year to the Employer Survey will provide further insight and projection of quality services to the satisfaction of both consumers and employers.

As we enter this new year, I would like to thank each council member for his or her efforts, input and support and challenge each of you to work even harder in FY 2003 to ensure that all Alabamians with disabilities are provided quality services and have an even greater opportunity to reach their maximum potential.

Steve Shivers, Commissioner
Alabama Department
of Rehabilitation Services

Purpose

The State Rehabilitation Council provides support and assistance to the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services through program planning, policy development and delivery of services.



History

In January 1995 the Alabama Legislature voted to move Vocational Rehabilitation Service from the State Department of Education to the newly formed Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). This milestone event created a unique partnership between the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the newly named board of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Working in partnership with ADRS, SRC provides valuable input in administrative codes and rules necessary to regulate Alabama's vocational rehabilitation services.

Working together, the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council strengthen the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services for all Alabamians with disabilities.



Council Functions

- ❖ to review and analyze the State Plan and advise ADRS regarding its related responsibilities within the plan;
- ❖ in partnership with ADRS, develop and review goals and priorities, evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, and submit reports of progress to the Rehabilitation Services Administration commissioner;
- ❖ to advise ADRS regarding authorized activities under the Rehabilitation Act and to assist in preparation of the State Plan, its amendments and in carrying out other requirements of the Act;
- ❖ to review and analyze the effectiveness of consumer and other surveys;
- ❖ to prepare and submit an annual report of council activities to the governor and the ADRS commissioner;
- ❖ to coordinate council activities with activities of other councils;
- ❖ to provide for coordination and establishment of working relationships between ADRS, the State Independent Living Council and independent living centers; and
- ❖ to perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act.

*SRC @ VRS:
A Partnership for Positive Change*

PERFORMANCE

Throughout the four quarterly meetings of FY 2002, the State Rehabilitation Council focused on performing functions and duties as outlined by the Rehabilitation Act. The following indicates such functions and activities:

Function: **Review, analyze and assist in preparation of state plan**

Activities:

1. Each member was given a copy of the State Plan and attachments to review and was asked to submit comments if it was felt that changes or recommendations were necessary.
2. Each member also was given a schedule and was invited to attend the State Plan public hearings.
3. SRC members were provided information on the new sliding fee schedule and asked for comments and suggestions.

Function: **Develop and review goals and priorities**

Activities:

1. The agency continued to notify the SRC of production goals, and the SRC agreed with them.
2. SRC members were given information on the agency's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) and given an opportunity for input. No significant changes were offered.
3. SRC members were notified of current training programs for VRS staff and consumers and given the opportunity for input.

Function: **Evaluate effectiveness of VR program and review and analyze effectiveness of consumer and other surveys**

Activities:

1. Each member was given information on the results of the agency's Consumer Satisfaction Survey and the opportunity for input. No significant changes were offered.
2. The SRC completed the development of a Statewide Needs Assessment and implemented it through collaboration with other disability organizations and the local VR Consumer Advisory Councils. (See activities of Consumer Services/Program Evaluation Subcommittee for more detailed information on the Statewide Needs Assessments results.)
3. The SRC was instrumental in the implementation of the Employer Survey. Specifically, the SRC Employment Subcommittee suggested changes to the survey which resulted in a shorter survey. (See Activities of Employment Subcommittee for more details on the Employer Survey.)

SRC & VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

Function: Coordinate council activities with activities of other councils

Activities:

1. The SRC continued to respond to information requests from other SRCs, including requests for annual reports and resource plans.

Function: Establish working relationships between Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), the State Independent Living Council (SILC), and independent living centers (ILCs)

Activities:

1. At least one member of the SRC continues to serve on the board of an independent living center and shares information between the two groups.
2. Some SRC members continue to serve on the SILC and are given the opportunity to report significant information back to the SRC.
3. Some SRC members are members of the Alabama Disabilities Action Coalition (ADAC), Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities, and the Independent Living Center. As such they share information from meetings so that activities can be coordinated. One example of such coordination was a statewide candidates forum, an advocacy event, in which members from the SRC and its local advisory councils participated.

Function: Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act

Activities:

1. The SRC Budget and Planning Subcommittee updated the SRC Resource Plan (see subcommittee report).
2. The SRC received information and an opportunity to give input on the following:
 - (a.) Welfare-to-Work Program
 - (b.) Outcome of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) monitoring visit
 - (c.) Priorities set by the agency's Blind Advisory Committee
 - (d.) Agency's interagency cooperative agreement with post-secondary institutions
 - (e.) Alabama Respite Resource Network

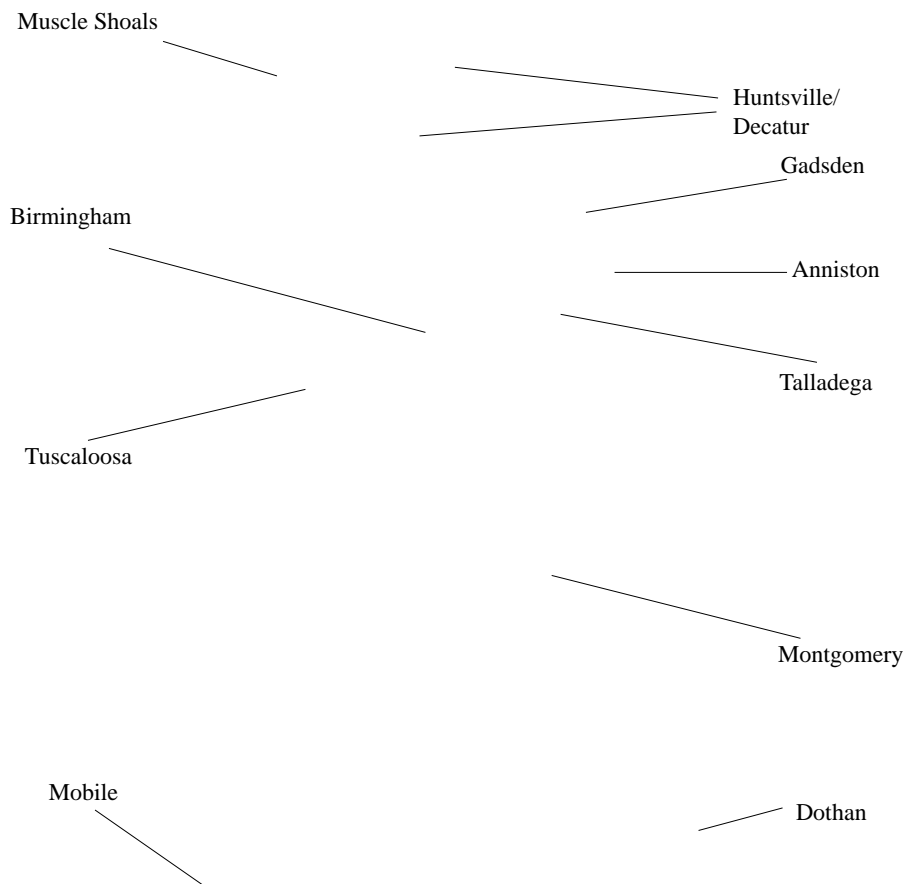
FY 2002 Highlights

**Vocational Rehabilitation
Service
I M P A C T S
Consumers**

- ❖ 43,577 consumers with disabilities received vocational training and employment assistance from Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS).
- ❖ 7,699 consumers became employed through the assistance of VRS.
- ❖ 89 percent of all consumers who became employed were severely disabled.
- ❖ The Alabama Business Leadership Network (BLN) has finalized their changes to the VRS electronic pool of job candidates and will be including employer access to this pool via their newly designed website. The site will also allow employers to post jobs or job bank websites for review by rehabilitation staff and consumers.
- ❖ VRS employment specialists and employment affiliates build ongoing relationships with business and industry throughout the state to provide vital contacts for job-ready consumers. During FY 2002, these specialists delivered 5,149 services to consumers and maintained 1,499 employer accounts.
- ❖ For every dollar spent on a rehabilitated consumer, \$19.52 was returned to the economy as a result of the consumer being placed into employment.
- ❖ Consumers with disabilities were served by VRS through 21 offices strategically located throughout the state.

**Networking With
Community-Based
VRS Consumer Advisory
Councils**

Local Advisory Councils



Local advisory councils continued to meet on a regular basis to ensure a voice for consumers at the grassroots level. Some local advisory councils met again with area legislators to educate them about issues affecting people with disabilities. They also further discussed the new work incentives in the Ticket to Work, Work Incentives-Improvement Act, transportation solutions, accessible parking solutions, and a statewide resource book for people with disabilities.

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

Subcommittee Activities

Executive Subcommittee Members

Chandler Bramlett, Chair	Bonner Wagnon	Steve Shivers
Carol Toney, Vice Chair	Graham Sisson	Barbara Crozier
Carol Blades	Jerry Norsworthy	

- Continued to schedule and make arrangements for quarterly meetings, plan the agendas and report SRC accomplishments.

Community, Business/Employer Development & Placement Subcommittee Members

Jeff Cofield, Chair	Glennie Melton	Jo Fowler	Carol Toney
Edsel Johnson	Diane Morrison	Beth Rhegness	

- Developed and adopted a new mission statement to read as follows: *To enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities and improve employer satisfaction with VR services.*
- Continued further discussion regarding the development of an employer web page for the Business Leadership Network web site.
- Began work on a best practices guide for transportation
- Reviewed employer survey questions and recommended keeping it limited to six questions (see page 12).
- Also recommended that the agency's active employer accounts be surveyed first and then later include job coaches and the full scope of employers in the agency's SMILE computer system.
- With respect to Business Leadership Network's applicant pool and web page for employers, the subcommittee recommended that VR counselors add clients to the applicant pool only if:
 1. the clients are job ready
 2. information is accurate and comprehensive, and
 3. applicant pool entry of information by the VR counselor is timely.
- Recommended converting the existing VR database to a web-based system
- The subcommittee continued to perform the following tasks and will do so beyond 2002:
 1. review/critique Intranet job bank and applicant pool
 2. review and make recommendations regarding results of annual employer survey
 3. enhance job development efforts by sharing labor market trend information
 4. identify areas of concern and needs of employers

Legislative/Public Information Subcommittee Members

Graham Sisson, Acting Chair	Lloyd Davis	Edsel Johnson	Jack Friday
-----------------------------	-------------	---------------	-------------

- Mission Statement: *To inform SRC members of existing and new legislation which affects the VRS program and persons with disabilities and to propose new legislation which will enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.*

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

- Continued to work toward proposed legislation to provide a state tax credit for employers who hire people with disabilities as well as work toward the development of a lemon law for wheelchairs. Also continued to report on activities of the governor's Alabama Disabilities Commission which involved legislative initiatives impacting persons with disabilities. Additionally, worked toward passage of an Alabamians With Disabilities Act. Also reported on activities of the Alabama Disabilities Action Coalition with respect to legislative activities. Discussed *Nick Dupree* SB 11 bill which would extend medicaid waiver benefits in the home to people beyond age 21. Discussed the Patient's Bill of Rights pending in the U.S. Congress.

Budget & Planning Subcommittee Members

Carol Blades, Chair	Bonner Wagnon	Liz Moore
Miriam Witherspoon		

- Mission Statement: *To review and comment on the agency budget and facilitate a working knowledge of the budget among the full Council; to work with the Council to develop topics for quarterly meetings; to ensure such topics are within the scope of the Council's responsibility; to participate in identifying additional funding sources for the agency; and to assist in the development of a Strategic Plan and Resource Plan for the full Council.*
- The subcommittee continues to work on planning topics of discussion at quarterly SRC meetings.
- The subcommittee also updated the SRC's Resource Plan to reflect changes in the agency's mileage reimbursement.

Consumer Services/Program Evaluation Subcommittee Members

Barbara Crozier, Chair	Sonya Kurtz	Carol Blades
Jerry Norsworthy	Kris Butler	Marilyn McPherson
Graham Sisson	Elisa Paramore	

- Mission Statement: *To enhance consumer satisfaction with services, service providers and employment, and to assist VRS in developing and implementing strategies to ensure consumer satisfaction.*
- Has continued to facilitate council review of the agency's consumer satisfaction survey and results.
- Reviewed draft of Statewide Needs Assessment and made the following recommendations:
 1. Add diabetes to list of disabilities
 2. Add question regarding whether person is currently working
 3. Add question regarding whether person is currently an ADRS client or has ever been an ADRS client
 4. Add question regarding whether person is full-time or part-time student
 5. Add question regarding whether person wants to work if he or she is not currently employed
 6. Eliminate request for the approximate number of people living in respondent's area
 7. Add physical access to medical care providers to list of unmet needs
 8. Add request for respondent's name and address and corresponding statement that this information would be kept confidential

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

9. Put survey on ADRS web site and send it out through e-mail

- Implemented the Statewide Needs Assessment (see attached summary for results).

Membership/Nomination Subcommittee Members

Bonner Wagnon, Chair Charles Butler Mark McClellan
Graham Sisson

- Secured reappointment of the following persons:
Charles Butler
Edsel Johnson
Sonya Kurtz
Mark McClellan
Liz Moore
- Secured appointment of the following new members for 2003:
Rev. Jay Croft
Beth Butler
Joan Adkison
Richard Cox
Leah Patterson-Lust
- Will continue to work towards ensuring that training needs of members are met, including education on standards and indicators of the VRS program, the VRS process, etc.

Bylaws Revision Subcommittee Members

Jerry Norsworthy, Chair Miriam Witherspoon Luddie Wade

- The subcommittee continues to monitor the effectiveness of the bylaws and will recommend any necessary changes on an annual basis.

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

Employer Survey

At the recommendation of the State Rehabilitation Council, a business and industry survey was conducted this past year. This was the first such survey conducted since FY 1998.

Questions on the Employer Satisfaction Survey

1. Quality of services provided - Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
2. Timeliness of services provided - Satisfactory/unsatisfactory
3. Considering the applicants you've hired from Rehab in the past six months, rate them on a scale of 1 - 10 with one being poor and ten being excellent ____.
4. (An option in lieu of #1 above): Services:
Please check the service you have received and rate your satisfaction:

<input type="checkbox"/> Post-hire follow-up	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Tax credits	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> On-the-job evaluations	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> On-site trainers/coaches	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> On-the-job training reimbursement	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Disability issues training	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Identifying essential job functions	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Work-site accommodations	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Injured or disabled worker assistance	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Info on the Americans with Disabilities Act	Satisfied/Not satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: please specify _____	
5. If satisfied with our services, would you refer us to other businesses? Y/N
6. Would you like to list your job vacancies on our Internet Website? Y/N

Summary of Results:

- Only 10% (75 of 765) businesses responded; however, 87% of those responses were positive.
- 43% of businesses did not receive their survey due to invalid addresses although the employer database was reviewed prior and obvious erroneous addresses were deleted before the mailout.
- 21% of respondents indicated that they either did not know us or had not utilized our services

It has been recommended that the database source be further evaluated before another survey is mailed. Also, multiple businesses such as Wal-mart, Winn-Dixie, CVS Pharmacy, etc. should be identified by a number to ensure that the returned survey represents the answers of a particular business.

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

Statewide Needs Assessment

This survey is being done to fulfill applicable requirements of the 1998 Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act. Information compiled from this survey will be used to improve services for people with disabilities and to advocate where appropriate for the development of programs to meet identified unmet needs. Please take time to complete this survey. Your input will help to make a positive difference in the lives of Alabama's citizens with disabilities. This survey is being conducted by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS).

Background Information

Please check one or more of the following which describes your disability(s):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aids/HIV | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Vision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amputee (missing arm(s) or leg(s)) | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arthritis/Rheumatism | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Retardation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma/respiratory impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Sclerosis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Autism | <input type="checkbox"/> Orthopedic/mobility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blind | <input type="checkbox"/> Spina Bifida |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cerebral Palsy | <input type="checkbox"/> Spinal Cord Injury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Cord Injury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Learning Disabilities (ASDD, ADHD, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf/Blind | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes | <input type="checkbox"/> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dwarfism | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hard of Hearing | |

Onset of Disability

Please check the following which apply to you:

- ☐ My disability or impairment occurred at birth
- ☐ My disability or impairment occurred between ages 3 and 22
- ☐ My disability or impairment occurred between ages 22 and 55
- ☐ My disability occurred after age 55

Educational Level

Please check the highest level of education which you have completed:

- ☐ Grades 1-5
- ☐ Grades 6-8
- ☐ Grades 9-12 (High School Diploma)
- ☐ College Degree
- ☐ Masters Degree
- ☐ Doctorate Degree

Annual Income Level

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-\$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000-\$90,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 - \$30,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$90,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 - \$50,000 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 - \$70,000 | |

Please state your age: ____

*SRC @ VRS:
A Partnership for Positive Change*

Gender: ____ **Female:** ____

Employment

Are you currently working? ____ yes ____ no

ADRS Client

Are you currently an ADRS client? ____ yes ____ no

Race

Please check one of the following which most accurately describes your race:

____ White ____ African-American ____ Asian or Pacific Islander
____ Native American ____ Multi-racial ____ Hispanic

Geographical area:

Please state the city and county where you live and the zip code.

____ City ____ County ____ Zip

Unmet or Partially Unmet Needs

Please rank the following unmet or partially unmet needs in order of importance with 1 beginning the most important and 15 being the least important:

____ Access to other people's houses	____ Medical care/health insurance
____ Access to voting	____ Medicine
____ Attendant Care	____ Physical Access to public and ____
Education	private buildings
____ Employment	____ Public Awareness of disability ____ Equipment/
technology	issues
____ Housing	____ Recreation
____ Information about resources, services	____ Transportation
benefits, etc.	____ *Other _____
____ Job or vocational training	

* This category need not be ranked

Other comments:

No later than April 2, 2002, please return this survey in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
Graham Sisson, ADRS, 2129 East South Blvd., Montgomery, AL 3611-0586 or fax to Graham Sisson @
334-284-3553. Remember to fax both sides of the survey.

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

Statewide Needs Assessment Results

Total number of surveys distributed: 1,000
Total number of surveys returned: 510

Top five list of unmet needs (overall)

1. Transportation
2. Employment
3. Job or Vocational training
4. Information about resources
5. Education

Return rate: 51%

Partial list of entities who received and/or distributed surveys:

Lakeshore Foundation	Darden Rehab Foundation (Gadsden)
Birmingham Independent Living Center	Easter Seals/Birmingham Area
Mobile Independent Living Center	Easter Seals Central Alabama
UCP of Birmingham	Northwest Easter Seals Rehab Center
Alabama Disabilities Action Coalition	Easter Seals West Alabama
ARC of Tuscaloosa County	Elks Memorial Center
ARC of Franklin County	Gentry Technical Facility
Centers for Developmentally Disabled, North	Goodwill Industries/Birmingham
Central Alabama, Inc.	Goodwill Industries-ES/Mobile
Clark County, ARC, Inc.	Goodwill Industries/Montgomery
ARC of Jefferson County, Inc.	Huntsville Rehab Center
Pell City Opportunity Center	Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf
The ARC of Calhoun and Cleburne Counties	Lakeshore Rehab Center
Shelby ARC	MARC
AWE/ARC	Mobile Association for the Blind
UCP of Mobile	Opportunity Center (Anniston)
Spina Bifida Association of Alabama	Smith Center
ARC of Alabama	Tennessee Valley Rehab Center
NAMI Alabama	Thomasville MH Rehab Center
Epilepsy Foundation of North and Central	West Central Alabama Rehab Center
Alabama	Wiregrass Rehab Center
Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program	Workshops, Inc.
Learning Disabilities Association of Alabama	Alabama Chapter National Multiple Sclerosis
American Diabetes Association, Alabama	Society
Affiliate, Inc.	Governor's Office on Disability
Alabama Council on Developmental	Special Education Action Committee
Disabilities	Indian Affairs Commission
Tuscaloosa County Mental Retardation	Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Councils
Authority, Inc.	AFB
Alabama Head Injury Foundation	NCB
State of Alabama Client Assistance Program	Spain Rehabilitation Center
Alabama Association for the Deaf	
COSDA (Council of Organizations Serving	
Deaf Alabamians)	
Opelika Achievement Center	

* Note each of the above entities only surveyed a random sample of its members.

*SRC @ VRS:
A Partnership for Positive Change*

Membership: Composition

State Rehabilitation Council Chart of Representation

Mandated Representation	Current Number of Representatives	Number of People with Disabilities	Number of Parents
Commissioner	1	0	0
State Independent Living Council	2	1	0
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	2	0	1
Client Assistance Program	1	1	0
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	1	0	0
Community Rehabilitation Programs	1	1	0
Business, Industry and Labor	9	0	0
Physical Disabilities	9	9	0
Cognitive Disabilities	2	2	0
Sensory Disabilities	2	2	0
Mental Illness	1	1	0
Mental Retardation	1	1	0
Advocacy Organization	1	0	0
American Indian Program Representative	1	0	0
WIA Representative	1	0	0
Former or Current Recipient of VRS Services	13	13	0
<i>Total</i>	48	31*	1

SRC membership consisted of persons with disabilities, parents and guardians of persons with disabilities, advocates, service providers and representatives of the business community and labor. A majority of the council consisted of persons with disabilities. Membership is geographically and culturally diverse to assure a broad view into decisions that impact vocational rehabilitation services.

* Actual membership is 28 with some individuals representing more than one category.

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

Membership: Demographics

SRC Members

E. Chandler Bramlett
SRC Chairperson
President/CEO
Infirmary Health System
Mobile



Barbara Crozier
WIA Representative
Executive Director
Governor's Office on Disability



Steve Shivers
Commissioner
Alabama Department of
Rehabilitation Services
Montgomery

Lloyd Davis
Employer Representative
Mobile



Carol Blades
Executive Director
Special Education Action
Committee
Mobile



Peggy Estes
Consumer
Talladega



Charles Butler
Consumer
Florence

Jo Fowler
Vice President
Communication Workers of
America
Birmingham



Robert Kris Butler
Consumer
State Independent Living Council
Opelika



Jack Friday
Consumer
Montgomery



Dr. DaLee Chambers
Special Education Services
Alabama Department of Education

Michael Gilbert
Executive Director
Indian Affairs Commission
Montgomery



Jeff Cofield
Disability Team Leader
Alabama Power Company
Birmingham



Edsel Johnson
Former Senior Vocational
Rehabilitation Service Counselor
and Liaison for Wiregrass
Rehabilitation Center
Dothan

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change



Sonya Slater Kurtz
Receptionist/Consumer
Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility
Birmingham

Mark McClellan
Consumer
Birmingham



Marilyn McPherson
Consumer
President
Gulf Coast Spinal Cord
Injury Association
Saraland

Glennie Melton
Senior Counselor
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Opelika



Liz Moore
Liz Moore Foundation
Birmingham

Diane Morrison
Executive Assistant
to the Human Resource Manager
Shaw Industries
Andalusia



Jerry Norsworthy
Director
State of Alabama
Client Assistance Program
Montgomery

Elisa Paramore
Teacher/Consumer
Dothan & Wiregrass Region



Beth Rhegness
Human Resource Director
Regions Bank
Montgomery

Graham L. Sisson, Jr.
Assistant Attorney General
Consumer Relations Coordinator
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Montgomery



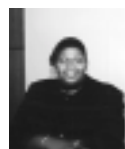
Carol Y. Toney
Service Center Director
U.S. Office of Personnel
Management
Huntsville

Luddie Wade (deceased)
Consumer Advocate
Alabama Department of Mental
Health/Mental Retardation
Tuscaloosa



Bonner Wagnon
Director of Community Life
Programs
Lakeshore Foundation
Birmingham

Jeana Winter
Special Education Action Committee
Montgomery



Miriam Denise Witherspoon
Attorney
Office of Senior Citizens in
Jefferson County
Fairfield

Appendices:

Bylaws

Article I Designation

- Section 1.** **The Name** - The organization referred to in this document shall be known as the *State Rehabilitation Council*, hereinafter referred to as the *Council*.
- Section 2.** **Authorization** - The Council is authorized in accordance with Title I, Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. Section 721 (a) 18)).

Article II Composition and Appointment

- Section 1.** **Composition** - The Council shall be composed of at least one representative of the Statewide Independent Living Council (representative may be the chairperson or other designee of the Council); at least one representative of a parent training and information center; at least one representative of the client assistance program; at least one qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor with knowledge of and experience with vocational rehabilitation programs who shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Council if the counselor is an employee of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services; at least one representative of community rehabilitation program service providers; four representatives of business, industry, and labor; representatives of disability advocacy groups representing a cross section of individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities; and representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves; current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services; at least one representative of the directors of the projects in a State in which one or more projects are carried out under Part C (American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services - Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grants); at least one representative of the state educational agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities who are eligible to receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and at least one representative of the State Workforce Investment Board.
- Section 2.** **Ex Officio Member** - The Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services shall be an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Council.
- Section 3.** **Appointment** - Members of the Council shall be appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall select members after soliciting recommendations from representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities. In selecting members, the Governor shall consider, to the greatest extent practicable, the extent to which minority populations are represented on the Council.
- Section 4.** **Qualifications** - A majority of Council members shall be persons who are individuals with disabilities not employed by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.
- Section 5.** **Chairperson** - The Council shall select a chairperson from among the membership of the Council.
- Section 6.** **Terms of Appointment** - Each member of the Council shall serve for a term of not more than three years.

SRC & VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

- Section 7. Vacancies** - A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which a predecessor was appointed, shall be appointed for the remainder of such term. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The vacancy shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the duties of the Council.
- Section 8. Terms of Service** - The terms of service of the members initially appointed shall be for such fewer number of years as will provide for the expiration of terms on a staggered basis.
- Section 9. Number of Terms** - No member of the Council, other than the State of Alabama Client Assistance Program representative and the Native American representative, may serve more than two consecutive full terms.
- Section 10. Delegation** - The Governor may delegate the authority to fill such a vacancy to the remaining members of the Council after making the original appointment.

Article III Council Functions

- Section 1. Review of the State Plan** - The Council shall review, analyze, and advise the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services regarding the performance of the responsibilities of the unit relating to eligibility (including order of selection); the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and functions performed by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services that affect or that potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under the Rehabilitation Act.
- Section 2. Development of State Goals and Priorities** - The Council shall, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, develop, agree to, and review state goals and priorities; and evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and submit reports of progress to the Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner.
- Section 3. Advice Regarding Certain Activities** - The Council shall advise the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services regarding activities authorized to be carried out under the Rehabilitation Act and assist in the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the Plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by the Act.
- Section 4. Consumer Satisfaction and Other Surveys** - The Council shall, to the extent feasible, conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of and consumer satisfaction with the functions performed by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this Act, and employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals receiving services under the Rehabilitation Act (including the availability of health and other employment benefits in connection with such employment outcomes).
- Section 5. Preparation of Report to the Governor and Rehabilitation Services Commissioner** - The Council shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Rehabilitation Services Commissioner on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the state, and make the report available to the public.
- Section 6. Coordination With Other Councils** - The Council shall, to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance the number of individuals served, coordinate activities with the activities of other councils within the state, including the statewide Independent Living Council, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act advisory panel, the State Developmental Disabilities Council, the state mental health planning council and the state workforce investment board.
- Section 7. Coordination of Working ADRS/SILC/CIL Relationships** - The Council shall provide

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and the State Independent Living Council and centers for independent living within the state.

Section 8. Other Functions - The Council shall perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act, as the State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate, that are comparable to the other functions performed by the Council.

Article IV Resources

The Council shall prepare, in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, a plan for the provision of such resources, including such staff and other personnel as may be necessary and sufficient to carry out the functions of the Council under this section. The resource plan shall, to the maximum extent possible, rely on the use of resources in existence during the period of implementation of the plan.

Article V Resolution of Disagreements

To the extent that there is a disagreement between the Council and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services in regard to the resources necessary to carry out the functions of the Council as set forth in this section, the disagreement shall be resolved by the Governor.

Article VI Council Personnel

Section 1. Supervision and Evaluation - The Council shall, in consistence with the state law, supervise and evaluate such staff and other personnel as may be necessary to carry out its functions.

Section 2. Personnel Conflict of Interest - While assisting the Council in carrying out its duties, staff and other personnel shall not be assigned duties by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services or any other agency or office of the state, that would create a conflict of interest.

Article VII Conflict of Interest

Section 1. Conflict of Interest - No member of the Council shall cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law.

Section 2. Conflict of Interest Statement - Each Council member shall sign a conflict of interest statement declaring that the member will disclose all material conflicts of interest in compliance with Section 1 of this article.

Section 3. Grants or Contracts - No Council member shall enter into any grant or contract with the Council or any governmental or private entity under the jurisdiction of the Council.

Article VIII Meetings

Section 1. Quarterly Meetings - The Council shall convene at least four (4) meetings a year in such places as it determines to be necessary to conduct Council business and conduct such forums or hearings as the Council considers appropriate. The meetings, hearings and forums shall be publicly announced. The meetings shall be open and accessible to the general public unless there is a valid reason for an executive session.

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

- Section 2. Meeting Notice** - All Council members shall be notified of quarterly meetings at least two (2) weeks in advance.
- Section 3. Called Meetings** - Special or emergency meetings may be called by the Council chairperson at the request of at least five (5) council members or the Executive Committee provided that all Council members have been notified of the meeting at least two (2) days in advance.
- Section 4. Attendance** - Council members with three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from regularly scheduled quarterly meetings may be asked to resign.
- Section 5. Sunshine Law** - All Council meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the *Sunshine Law*.

Article IX Quorums

- Section 1. Quorum for Council Meetings** - A quorum for all Council meetings shall constitute the members present but in no case shall it be less than seven (7) members.
- Section 2. Quorum for Committee Meetings** - There shall be no quorum requirement for Council committees.

Article X Voting

- Section 1. Eligible Voters** - All Council members who are present are entitled to vote on all matters before the Council.
- Section 2. Majority** - A simple majority vote shall be required to pass all motions.
- Section 3. Proxy Voting** - Absent members may vote by proxy. Such proxy must be in writing and assigned a specific Council member. The Council member holding the proxy must declare the proxy vote each time it is used.
- Section 4. Tie Vote** - The chairperson shall be entitled to vote only in the event of a tie vote.
- Section 5. Recorded Votes** - A visual and auditory vote shall be taken each time a vote is called with a record thereof made a part of the Council meeting minutes.
- Section 6. Accessible Formats** - Upon request, all documents produced or maintained by the Council shall be made available in alternate formats.

Article XI Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of business of all Council and committee meetings to the extent they are applicable and not in conflict with these bylaws.

Article XII Compensation and Expenses

- Section 1. Reimbursement** - The Council may use funds allocated to the Council by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services to reimburse members of the Council for reasonable and necessary expenses of attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services) and to pay compensation to a member of the Council if such member is not employed or must forfeit wages from other

SRC @ VRS: A Partnership for Positive Change

employment for each day the member is engaged in performing the duties of the Council.

- Section 2. Reimbursement Authorization** - The Council chairperson shall obtain reimbursement authorization from the commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services prior to calling any and all Council or committee meetings.
- Section 3. Reimbursement Rate** - Council members shall be reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses at State rates upon the approval of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

Article XIII Hearings and Forums

The Council is authorized to hold such hearings and forums as the Council may determine to be necessary to carry out the duties of the Council.

Article XIV Council Officers and Their Duties

- Section 1. Officers** - The Council shall have a chairperson and a vice-chairperson.
- Section 2. Nomination and Election** - Officers shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by secret ballot by a majority vote of those present and voting.
- Section 3. Time of Election** - The election of new officers shall take place at the last regularly scheduled quarterly council meeting prior to the expiration of the current term.
- Section 4. Assumption of Office** - New officers shall take office at the next regularly scheduled quarterly council meeting after election to office.
- Section 5. Term of Office** - Officers shall hold office for the remainder of their council term but, in no event, shall they serve longer than six (6) consecutive years. They shall retain their office if reappointed as council members upon the expiration of their current council membership term.
- Section 6. Chairperson's Duties** - The chairperson shall preside at all Council meetings, appoint committee chairs, set the agenda for council meetings and chair the executive committee.
- Section 7. Vice-Chairperson's Duties** - The vice-chairperson shall assume the duties of the chairperson upon the chairperson's absence or refusal to perform the duties of the chair.

Article XV Council Committees

- Section 1. Committees** - The Council shall have the following standing committees: Executive, Consumer Services/Program Evaluation, Legislative, Community Business/Employer Development, Membership/Nomination, and Bylaws.
- Section 2. Executive Committee** - The executive committee shall be composed of the council chairperson, vice-chairperson, the commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, and the chairpersons of the standing committees.
- Section 3. Committee Duties** - Each committee shall develop a mission statement to serve as a guideline for its duties and tasks.

*SRC & VRS:
A Partnership for Positive Change*

**Article XVI
Revising the Bylaws**

- Section 1.** **Adoption** - A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those council members present and voting shall be necessary to adopt these Bylaws and any revision thereof.
- Section 2.** **Notice of Intent to Revise** - Any proposed revision of these Bylaws shall be presented in writing to all council members prior to adoption at least seven (7) days in advance.

State Rehabilitation Council Conflict of Interest Policy

Statement of Policy

No member of the council shall cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the member's organization or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law. 34 CFR Part 361.17 (g). When conflicts of interest are identified, the council member to whom the conflict applies must abstain from voting on the issue causing the conflict.

Required Disclosure

Each council member shall disclose orally or in writing all conflicts of interest, including those which are unclear or potential. Such disclosure shall be made to the chairperson of the council.

Effective Date

This Conflict of Interest Policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by a majority of the council. Upon such approval, this policy is incorporated by reference into the council bylaws.

Approved: November 29, 2000
 E. Chandler Bramlett
 SRC Chairperson



**Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES**

**Steve Shivers
Commissioner**

**2129 East South Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36116-2455
(334) 281-8780**

**1-800-441-7607 • TTY 1-800-499-1816
Fax: (334) 281-1973 • ADA Hotline 1-800-205-9986
www.rehab.state.al.us**